

National Finalists from Iowa

POETRY

A Leaf by Tessa Meyer, age 13 of Cambridge

Spring Thunderstorm by Cori Dahlby Albright, age 11 of Grinnell

Iowa Runners-Up

POETRY

Fish by Bella Hager, age 8 of West Des Moines

Seaweed by Bevan Fogdall, age 11 of West Des Moines

The Symphony of Nature by Ava Dietrich, age 11 of Grinnell

Finding Peace by Kjistine Peterson, age 13 of Ankeny

The World Against Me by Kjistine Peterson, age 13 of Ankeny

Nature Shakes and Shivers by Justeen Schoner, age 17 of Des Moines

ART

Colorful Fall by Emma Chambers, age 9 of Dubuque

Farmland Sunset by Kennedy Boyd, age 10 of Waukee

Swimming by Amanda Schuler, age 13 of State Center

Seashells in the River of Lace by Justeen Schoner, age 17 of Des Moines

Koi River by Angel McLaughlin, age 16 of Mason City

Iowa Honorable Mentions

POETRY

Beach by Louie Hartkop, age 8 of Clive

Storm by Madison Shilling, age 12 of Knoxville

Pick-Plock by Catalina Cucu, age 17 of Keota

The Forms it Takes by Myle Duong, age 18 of Davenport

ART

Mountain Creek by Adam McFee, age 10 of Grinnell

The Tiger by Danielle Oberfoell, age 11 of West Des Moines

Bobwhite Quails by Kaitlyn Hood, age 13 of Ankeny

Breezy Meadow by Ashli Van Deest, age 14 of Grundy Center

Mill on Oak Hill by Julia Eastin, age 12 of Ankeny

The beauty of Water Adam Hendersott, age 16 of Davenport

Water The Key to Life by Tillie Sitz, age 16 of Davenport

What's really in our water? by Collin Garrett, age 16 of Davenport

Feather Fun by Justeen Schoner, age 17 of Des Moines

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Every year, River of Words® conducts an international environmental poetry and art competition for youth aged 5 to 19 in grades K–12, in affiliation with the Library of Congress Center for the Book and St. Mary's College of California. This free contest is designed to help young people explore the natural environment and cultural history of the place they live and to express what they discover through poetry and art. Iowa entries not chosen as finalists or grand-prize winners in the international contest are returned to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, where they are judged in a statewide competition.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources coordinates the River of Words® Iowa Environmental Art and Poetry Competition. This year, over 330 students from Iowa entered the contest through their schools, community art centers, community groups, or on their own. The Iowa entries are evaluated by a panel of judges, and the top works in each category are selected to be included in an exhibit that will travel around the state for the coming year. This year's exhibit includes 35 works of poetry and art by talented Iowa students.

We hope you enjoy these efforts by Iowa's youth to explore and understand our environment and to express their experiences through art and poetry.

For more information, contact:

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The Iowa Department of Natural Resources presents the 2013 River of Words® Iowa Environmental Art & Poetry Contest Winners



IOWA WINNER
Grades 7-9th Art
Suzanna Host, Age 14
Polk City, Iowa
The Shallows

ROW is affiliated with The Library of Congress Center for the Book and St. Mary's College of California.

Unforgiving Stream

Where we used to play,
the droning wind makes its way amidst the trees.
A high-pitched whisper signaling hope.

A messenger of the stream
we skipped to on scalding summer days.
The stream we stuck our size-two feet in
anxiously watching the tadpoles grow,
wearing our bathing suits so little.

The stream back behind the woods, under the everlasting sky.
Our surreal place
where we were free of all burdens.
The secrets we kept
embedded beneath the untainted soil.

But time ran its course in our mystical place
and our desires were unable to stop it.
We grew like the tadpoles
slowly yet undoubtedly.
We drifted apart
like the raft we tried to escape on
the day of the divorce.

I go down there sometimes.
It's still serene, but the beauty is broken.
The water numbs my feet
and I wait.

I wait for the raft to come back
so we can mend it together.
Maybe this time, it will take us in the same direction.
Away from the limits of others
like we used to be before.

Although the raft will never reappear,
the piercing stream unwaveringly flows
and the icy wind still howls.

IOWA WINNER Grade 7-9th Poetry
Shivani Kumaresan, Age 13
Urbandale, Iowa
Unforgiving Stream



IOWA WINNER Grade K- 3rd Art
Emma Chambers, Age 9
Dubuque, Iowa
Water Lilies

King of the Pond

iridescent green feathers
flutter in the wind
glide elegantly through the sky
guided to a pond of honks and hollers
lands with a splash
in the shimmering water

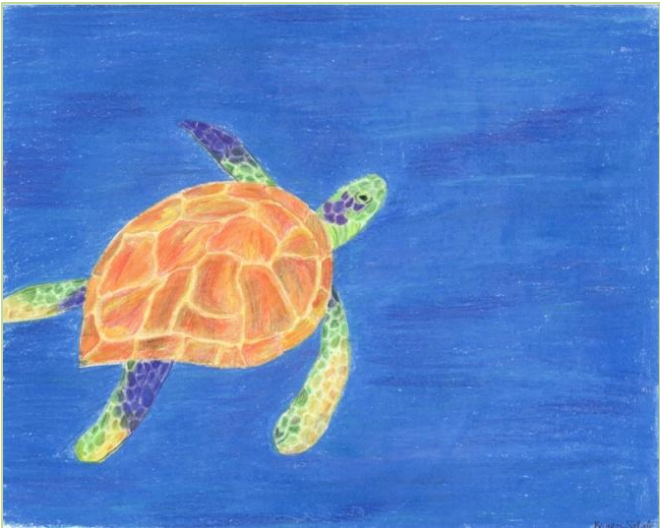
IOWA WINNER Grade 4- 6th Poetry
Max Wilson, Age 11
Sacred Heart School, West Des Moines, Iowa
King of the Pond

IOWA WINNER Grade 10- 12th Poetry
Xena Fitzgerald, Age 18
Mt. Vernon, Iowa
The Whisper of the Sky

The Beach

The flowing waves
push on my feet.
Out in the distance
the smallest sailboat
sails.
Up in the sky
a flock of seagulls
glides by.
A little snail
struggles to get
out of the sand.

IOWA WINNER Grade K- 3rd Poetry
Olivia Spracklin, Age 9
Sacred Heart School, West Des Moines, Iowa
The Beach



IOWA WINNER Grade 10-12th Art
Karen Selof, Age 15
North Polk High School
Sea Turtle

The Whisper of the Sky

The sky whispers in a tongue foreign to my ears.
The clouds allude to a story I've never heard.
The rain begins.
The sky weeps, and does not invite me to join.

I wonder if the sky welcomed the first life on earth.
Is it possible to find friendship among the clouds?
Or is each man left, encased,
alone,
in the sky's hollow skull,
as I have been?
To scratch at the cracks and cling to the groves
in search of a soul,
in search of a soft grey embrace
to signify acceptance,
or at least acknowledgement:
I exist.

The rain sojourns sporadically.
I try to ignore it, only out of spite,
as it ignored me.
Still, I see the rain in the empty space it occupies.
I see the rain in myself and cannot escape
it's soft, wet pulse.
Perhaps we are meant to be friends.

IOWA WINNER Grade 4-6th Art
Kayla Moats, Age 12
Knoxville Middle School
Blank Park Zoo

